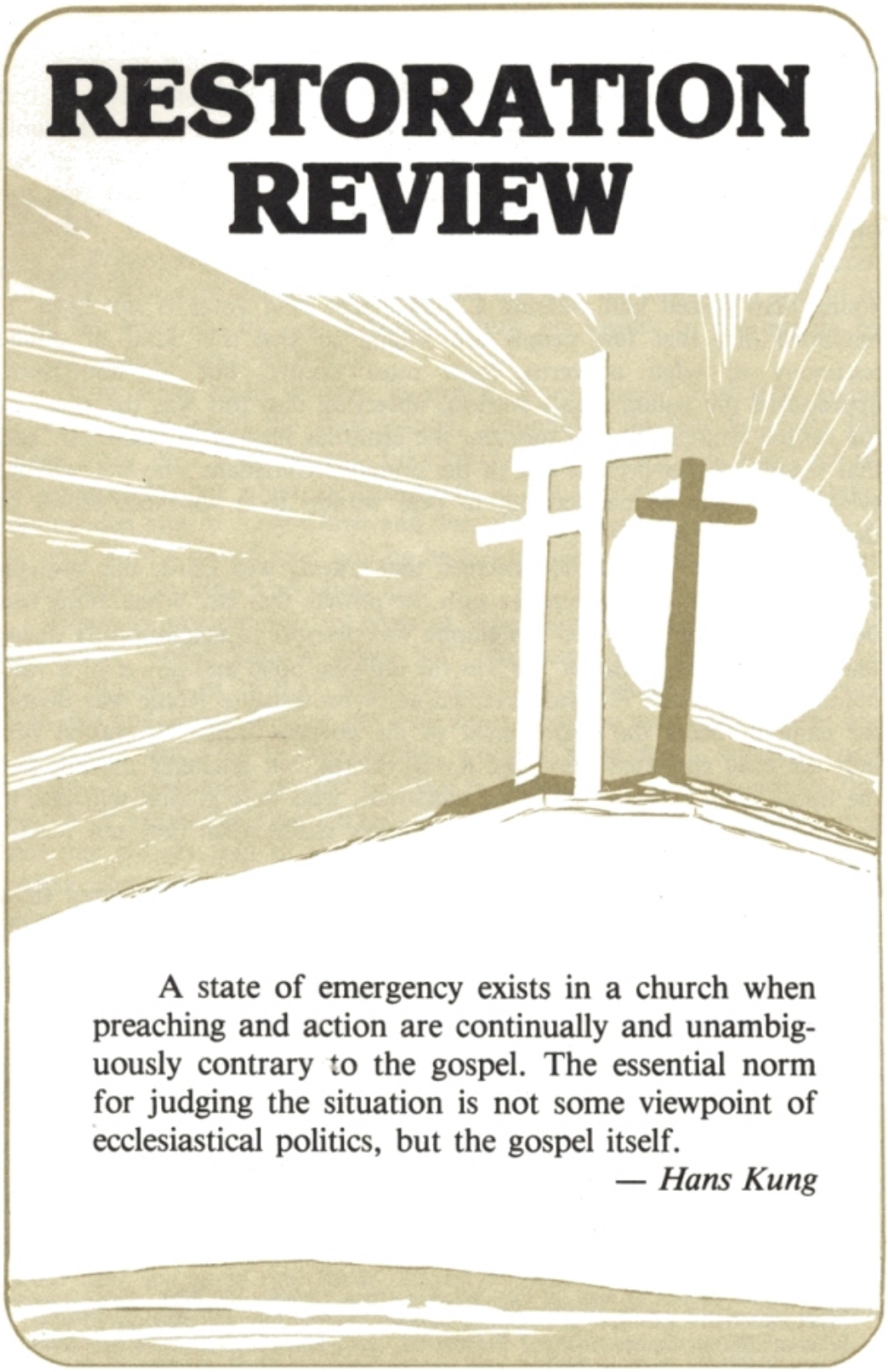
RESTORATION REVIEW



A state of emergency exists in a church when preaching and action are continually and unambiguously contrary to the gospel. The essential norm for judging the situation is not some viewpoint of ecclesiastical politics, but the gospel itself.

— *Hans Kung*

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Jesus Today …

JESUS IS LORD!

No one can say, "Jesus is Lord, " except by the Holy Spirit. -- I Cor. 12:3

One of the British theologians tells how on a visit to the beach a young man passed him wearing a T-shirt that read *Jesus* is *my Lord.* It reminded him that few people are willing to give that kind of public testimony to what concerns them most deeply, but he nonetheless appreciated the young man's witness, observing that this was the creed of the earliest church. At that moment the centuries seemed to disappear, and that young believer became one of the primitive Christians who was willing, even in the face of persecution, to bear witness to a sea-shore crowd to their one creed, *Jesus* is *Lord!* .

Since Rome had already decreed that Caesar was Lord, this brought the believers into deadly conflict with the powers that be. When Jesus was born the emperor that ruled the empire was deemed so magnificently divine that he was called *Augustus.* He was the unifying bond and power of a vast, homogenous people. He was accepted as divine because Rome was divine, the emperor being the embodiment of the goddess Roma. It was at first only the dead emperors who were *Kyrios* (Lord), but gradually the title and the honor were given to the living monarchs, who were at first reluctant to be hailed as gods. But they accepted it more easily when they saw it as a politically unifying influence.

Malcolm Muggeridge, the British journalist who was converted from atheism by discovering the Jesus of the apostolic writings, writes of the confrontation that loomed between Caesar Augustus and the lowly child born in Bethlehem, who was among the least significant of his millions of subjects. At the time Jesus was born Augustus was enjoying such prosperity and success that it was supposed that his empire would stand forever, and already he was being worshipped with all the appropriate rites due a god.

"As it turned out," says Muggeridge in his *Jesus: The Man Who Lives*," their roles were to be reversed; for centuries to come Jesus would reign over men's minds and hearts, when Augustus's kingdom existed only in history books and ruins.

Emperor worship was made compulsory in Rome. Once a year one had to enter a temple and burn a pinch of incense at the altar, confessing aloud, *Caesar* is *Lord!*, thus proving his loyalty to the empire. Once he did this he could worship any other god he pleased. This the believers would not do, for to them there was but one Lord and that was Jesus of Nazareth. This brought persecution and martyrdom, such as the famous case of Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, who was burned at the stake in about 156 A.D. Respected for

his good life and old age, the authorities sought to avoid his execution by urging him to show his loyalty to the empire by acknowledging Caesar as *Kyrios.*

"Now what harm is there in saying 'Lord Caesar' and thus saving thyself?," they asked the aged bishop, reminding him that he could still follow Jesus also if he wished. Like his Lord, Polycarp was silent before his persecutors, but when the proconsul, in the very shadow of the stake, commanded him to curse Christ and live, the old brother said, "Eighty and six years have I served him, and he hath done me no wrong; how then can I blaspheme my king who saved me?"

Emperor worship was so gross in Pergamum that Rev. 2:13 refers to the city as "where Satan's throne is," indicating that Satan actually ruled over it. As early as 29 B.C. a temple was built in Pergamum to the divine Augustus and Roma, and at the time Jesus wrote to that church there was a local cult dedicated to Aesculapius, whose symbol was a serpent. There was also a monument erected to Zeus as Savior. It is understandable that Rev. 2:13 would describe Pergamum as "where Satan dwells," and it is here that we are told of Antipas, whom Jesus describes as "my faithful martyr who was killed among you." It is likely that Antipas was killed because he would not confess to the lordship of Zeus, Augustus, Roma or Aesculapius. *Jesus* is *Lord!* He had no other creed; he would confess to no other lord.

It is in the context of persecution that we can best understand the passage that begins this study: "I want you to understand that no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says, 'Jesus be cursed!' and no one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit" (I Cor. 12:3). The curse of Jesus probably refers to the customary litany of curses pronounced in Jewish synagogues, this curse being added during the height of Jewish persecution against believers. Sometimes, as in the case at Corinth, believers met near or even next door to a synagogue (see Acts 18:7) where they would hear the curse ring forth, amidst a chant of many curses, *Jesus of Nazareth be cursed!* In answering questions about the Spirit, the apostle assures the Corinthians that they can know for sure that the Spirit of God is not with such people.

Some think that Paul may be referring to nonsense expressions of those babbling in a tongue, for even believers would sometimes cry out *Jesus be cursed!* Paul is telling them, perhaps in response to an inquiry about it, that no person is motivated by the Spirit who talks that way. The first interpretation is to be preferred.

As for the confession *Jesus is Lord*, the apostle does not mean, of course, that if one can merely pronounce those words that this proves she has the Spirit. It may have reference to making that good confession before Roman authorities upon the pain of death. Only the Spirit can empower one to stand up for Jesus as Lord at a time like that. Or the

apostle may, since he is writing on the diverse gifts of the Spirit, refer to the greatest of all the gifts of the Spirit, that of being a Christian. To say that *Jesus is Lord* is the way they professed being a Christian, and no one can be a Christian, Paul is saying, except the Holy Spirit be with him and in him. He says this in so many words in Rom. 8:9: "Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him."

This is radically frank and puts the finger on the basic ingredient of being a true Christian: *the enthronement of Jesus Christ as the Lord of one's life.* Paul is saying that this is the mission of the Spirit in the believer's heart. He can't say -- can't really accept the reality of -- *Jesus is Lord!* except by the help of the Holy Spirit. No Holy Spirit, no lordship of Jesus; no lordship of Jesus, no Holy Spirit. This is what ails the carnal Christian. Jesus is not really Lord to her, and will not be until she surrenders to the influence of the Spirit.

The apostle Peter places Jesus' lordship at the heart of the gospel: "Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified" (Acts 2:36). Peter must be saying that Jesus was *made* Lord, or perhaps *coronated* Lord, through the resurrection. While the disciples referred to Jesus as Lord during his earthly ministry, they probably would have thought of his lordship only in the past tense (He *was* our Lord) had it not been that he became the risen Christ. So, *Jesus is Lord!* became their only creed.

Peter's declaration that Jesus is *hath* Lord and Christ again gives us the heart of mere Christianity. It is one thing to believe that Jesus is the Christ, but it is even more to make him the master of our lives. And this is the relevance of Jesus today. As Lord he has loving control of our lives. We are willing slaves who look to him as the source of our strength, the provider of all our needs. We no longer have wills of our own, except as they are lost (and thus gained) in his will. We realize that since he is mankind like ourselves, as well as divine like the Father, he is uniquely qualified to deal with our troubled existence. One Scripture indicates that Jesus' lordship and priesthood could have come in no other way than for him to become like us: "He had to be made like his brethren in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make expiation for the sins of the people" (Heb. 2:17).

What this means to us today is further clarified in Jn. 13:13, where Jesus accepts from his diciples such descriptions as Teacher and Lord, but he did a most unusual thing to show them that there is more to it than what they call him, however honorific such titles may be. He proceeded to wash their feet. The Son of God washing the feet of sinful sons of men! Is that not one of the profundities of the gospel story? He then says to them; "If 1

then, your Lord and teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet" (In. 13:14).

This is poetry in action. We are being crass to suppose that the Lord-Teacher is referring to literal washing of feet, which would have little meaning in our world. He was giving an object lesson of the new commandment that he went on to talk about, "As I have loved you, you are to love one another" (verse 34). We wash each other's feet by caring for one another in all sorts of ways. And this is the meaning of Jesus' lordship in our lives today, that we love even as he loves. So the confessional creed *Jesus is Lord!*, probably the only baptismal creed the earliest church had, is more than a creed. It is our way of life as believers. That Jesus is Lord is what it is all about. But still it *is* a creed, and Rom. 10:9 makes it basic: "If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." We are being superficial when we make this a "step" in a plan of salvation, as if confession is "taken care of" once we say we believe in Christ and then go on to be baptized, the final step. This is only to abuse the word. In the first place, the apostle writes in the present tense, as if to say, "If you keep on professing Jesus as Lord," which may allude to doing so repeatedly to an unbelieving world, yea, even a persecuting Roman procurator. Or it refers to a lifetime of consistent profession of the lordship of Jesus. But it is certain and overt, allowing for no "closet" Christians: *If you keep on confessing with your lips*… The apostle does not promise that they will not be killed, only that they will be saved!

We are not only unkind to Scripture when we make this verse a prooftext for a step in a plan, but also when we hasten to move from it to other prooftexts, lest someone get the idea that this is all that one has to do to be saved. It is hardly the way to treat the Bible, as if the readers of *Romans* had a New Testament like ourselves and could turn to all the proof texts in the plan! I am willing to leave it as it reads. The apostle says if the Romans, who were already Christians, will lead a life that acknowledges the lordship of Jesus and will keep on believing that he is the risen Christ, they will be saved. It would surely be unthinkable to the apostle that anyone who so confesses and so believes would be lost.

The apostle seemed to have a cosmic view about this confession, concluding that everyone will one day yield to the lordship of Jesus, even if not for salvation: "At the name of Jesus," he says, pointing to his authority, "every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:10-11). What a contemplation! Whether angels or demons or kings or tyrants, all will eventually concede that Jesus is Lord. We would think it might come hard for a Hitler or a Stalin or a Mao, and it is certainly bad news for my dear fellow Texan, Madelyn O'Hare, who probably now has no such intention. But Paul says it will come, some way, somehow. *Jesus* is *Lord* has cosmic reality.

But for us who believe the matter is not so complex, or, to put it another way, our responsibility is different. Even when we accept Jesus' lordship as a reality in our lives, we are to understand that there is a dimension beyond this: "In your hearts reverence Christ as Lord," we are told in 1 Pet. 3:15, and the apostle, writing to a persecuted people and possibly alluding to the threat Rome held over those who were true believers, added, "Always be prepared to make a defense to anyone who calls you to account for the hope that is in you."

Now we have our mandate from Scripture. Whether at the factory, at home, on campus, at church, or out among them there is one thing about our lives that is to be apparent, and this affects all our choices and values. *Jesus* is *Lord!* We reverence him and enthrone him in our hearts as such, and we acknowledge him before the world as the reason for our hope. -- *the Editor*

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BAPTISM AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

Jesus' baptism at the hands of his kinsman is a story both amazing and unlikely. It is amazing because of all the impressive ingredients: two young men launching a New Age met for the first time at a public initiation service; the heavens open; the Holy Spirit descends; a voice from heaven proclaims Jesus to be the Son of God. That is amazing! The story is so unlikely that it becomes a testimonial to the integrity of Scripture, for no one would ever have fabricated such an event. Even now it is rather difficult to explain why Jesus should have been baptized, for baptism has always been for sinners, for those who needed to be cleansed. It was so unlikely that even John shrank from baptizing the sinless one who had come.

But the most amazing part of the story -- and again the unlikeliest? -- is that Jesus received the Holy Spirit at the time of his baptism. We might suppose he came into the world endowed by God's Spirit, or that by -- his very nature he was infused with it. It was certainly the Father's intention that the Spirit would constantly monitor the Son's life: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good tidings to the afflicted," promised the Messianic prophet (Isa. 61.1), and in Lk. 4:18 Jesus, while teaching in his home synagogue, applies the prophecy to himself. The apostle Peter later explained that "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power" (Acts *10:38).*

Jesus was anointed the Messiah, or formally became the Christ (which means *anointed)* when he was baptized, at the time he received the Spirit. Not only did this fulfill the Scriptures, but it empowered him to do all that lay before him. It is noteworthy that no sooner was Jesus baptized that he was led away by the Spirit to be tempted of Satan. His baptism was thus an initiation into the work he had come to do, and it was accompanied by God's anointing, the endowment of the Holy Spirit.

This was John's sign that the one who came to him was indeed the one John was looking for: "I myself did not know him; but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.'" So once he saw the Spirit descend as a dove from heaven and settle on Jesus, he could add: *I have seen and have borne witness that this* is *the Son of God.*

While the rabbis, like the Old Testament before them, anticipated that the coming Messiah would be endowed with the Spirit, there is nothing in Jewish tradition to the effect that the Messiah would be baptized. And certainly no suggestion that he would receive the Spirit in connection with his baptism! This is one more instance where the God of heaven did not allow Himself to be second-guessed by the clergy, who were supposed to know everything of course. Jesus was clearly not the Messiah called for in rabbinic teaching.

We may suppose that John himself was never baptized, for he came to initiate people into the coming kingdom, not to be a part of that new reign himself. He was nonetheless a witness to one of heaven's most dramatic moments on earth. He not only was favored of God to baptize Jesus with his own hands, an experience so awesome in its implication that he sought to escape it, but he actually witnessed the Messiah's endowment of the Holy Spirit, which might be called a baptism of the Spirit. While *he* baptized Jesus with water, *God* baptized him with the Holy Spirit. John *sees* all this. There is the dove, dispatched by God out of somewhere as if it knew exactly what to do, that lighted on him and *settled* there. I would guess that it settled on his upper back since Luke, the master of intimate detail, tells us that Jesus was praying.

That itself was enough to mesmerize John, to see the long-looked for dove do its thing like that, *remaining* (as if forever?) on him, and the prophet realized that this dove was the Holy Spirit in bodily form. Talk about drama! But that was not all, for the heavens opened and a voice proclaimed, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased" (Mt. 3:17). Luke indicates that God addressed the Son directly, "Thou art my beloved Son, with thee I am well-pleased" (Lk. 3:22). We cannot be sure about this detail. What is significant is that it was at his baptism that Jesus received the Holy Spirit, and it was at that moment that he was publicly proclaimed God's own Son from heaven itself -- from the *opened* heaven, mind you.

This says some important things to me about baptism. That Jesus -- the one person in the world that did not need baptism -- should be baptized should end once for all any put-down of the significance of baptism. One who takes this story seriously cannot dismiss baptism with a wave of the hand, as if it does not really matter. And does this not give us the supreme motive for being baptized, *because Jesus was.* To be his disciple is to follow him. We begin that discipleship by being baptized like he was. What is wrong with that reason, however many other good reasons there are? Since our minds tend to be legalistic or exacting regarding external ordinance, there are those who will surely ask, did Jesus *have* to be baptized? It is interesting that he never indicates that. While John said, protesting, "I *need* to be baptized of you," Jesus simply said, "It is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." What is wrong with that reason? Can we think only in terms of something being *essential* or *absolutely necessary.* So one can approach baptism with this attitude: *It is appropriate or it is fitting,* in view of all that Scripture says.

Another thing this story says to me is that there is a significant relationship between baptism and receiving the Holy Spirit. If the Spirit is for me as well as for Jesus, would it not be reasonable for me to suppose that if Jesus received the Spirit at his baptism that is when I will receive it? Jesus did not receive the Spirit by "praying through" or when others laid hands on him, praying that he would "receive." The Spirit did not come only after long, agonizing "seeking" on the part of the Son of God. It was by simple, humble obedience. He was baptized and received the Spirit. You would think that the "charismatic" of our day would be influenced by this profound incident and advise people to be baptized like Jesus was so as to receive the Spirit like he did.

It is worth noting in passing that even though Jesus had the Spirit without measure, apparently more than anyone else ever, according to Jn. 3:34, he did not speak in tongues, or at least there is no indication of this. This should help us to see that one may have an outpouring of the Spirit today and yet not be "charismatic" in that sense.

Apart from the fact that Jesus received the Spirit at baptism, there is evidence elsewhere in Scripture that the Spirit is related to baptism in this way. The seven ones of Eph. 4 include both "one baptism" and "one Spirit," and these are often joined in Scripture, such as in Acts 2:38: "Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." While Jesus' baptism could not have been for the forgiveness of sins, the passage is otherwise reminiscent of Jesus' baptism.

Titus 3:5 couples baptism and the Spirit: "He saved us … by the washing of regeneration and the renewal of the Holy Spirit." Eph. 5:26 is suggestive of the same idea, "the washing of water with the word," while I Cor. 12:13, "By one Spirit we were all baptized

into one body," may be as good a commentary on what happened at Jesus' baptism as can be found. Through baptism Jesus, by the Spirit, was ushered into a new age relationship. The Spirit likewise initiates us into the new community, the Body of Christ.

Acts 10:47-48 is especially interesting in that it indicates that the earliest church automatically connected baptism and the Spirit. Even when the house of Cornelius received the Spirit *before* and *without* baptism, the apostle Peter raised the question about their baptism, insisting that they be baptized. Acts 8:14-17 is just the reverse in that the Samaritans had been baptized but had not received the Spirit. But in both instances the connection is made, sooner or later: baptism and the Spirit are connected. These unusual cases tend to confirm what was usual. Ordinarily believers were baptized and received the Spirit like Jesus, and there is a recognized irregularity when this was not the case.

A concluding point is as vital as any. Baptism and the Spirit was followed by a life of power. Acts 10:38 reveals that Jesus was anointed with power as well as or in conjunction with receiving the Spirit, while Luke 4:14 refers to "the power of the Spirit" that was with Jesus. This is the sure mark of the Christian, for a believer without power is a contradiction: "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope" (Rom. 15:13). -- *the Editor*

The way of the world is to praise dead saints and persecute living ones. -- *Nathaniel Howe*

Half the confusion in the world comes from not knowing how little we need. I live more simply now, and with more peace. -- *Richard Byrd*

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THE CHURCH OF CHRIST OF TOMORROW

As Ouida and I were driving home from a house meeting in the Mid-Cities area (between Dallas and Fort Worth), I said to her with cautious optimism, *Well, tonight we were with the Church of Christ of tomorrow.* While she agreed, neither of us was saying that the Church of Christ of today is necessarily all that bad. We were simply recognizing that a religious body, like an individual, has to *grow* if it ever matures into a reasonable

and responsible spiritual force. While Churches of Christ may seem to be caught on dead center by a native sectarianism, we are easing our way into the deeper waters of the mainstream, and we *will* stay afloat and move, even if slowly.

There is a reluctant acceptance of denominationalism in what I am saying. *Of course* the Churches of Christ are a denomination, if not several denominations. I say a *reluctant* acceptance because any unity-minded believer admits that denominationalism is far from the ideal, and he looks to the day when denominationalism will be transcended. No one knows how this may come about, but if we believe that our Lord's prayer for the unity of all believers will indeed be answered, we are confident that one glorious united church upon earth will one day be a reality. None of us created the denominations; they have been handed to us by centuries of history. It looks as if the best way to overcome our divisions is to work through the existing institutions. I am persuaded that the most effective way to make Churches of Christ freer, more spiritual, and less-sectarian is to work within its structures.

While I reluctantly accept denominational reality as a means of overcoming it, I refuse to be a sectarian or to belong to a sectarian church, if I can help it. By sectarian I refer to that claim to righteousness that sets all others at naught, or that presumes to be the only Christians rather than Christians only. I refuse to make my opinions and deductions a test of fellowship, and I will not be a member of a congregation that rejects a sister or brother for whom Christ died for the sake of some party creed.

So I am making a crucial distinction between a sect and a denomination. The latter is simply a group set apart by its own name and structure, recognizing that while it is part of the church catholic it is not the whole of that church. A sect, however, claims to be the only true church, rejecting all others. Many of those who insist that they are not a denomination only give testimony to their sectarian character, for they are really saying that all others are denominations while they, being the true church, are not. The exception to this would be those independent congregations that wear no denominational name nor any such affiliations. While these may be applauded for what they are, it is by no means certain that this is the way for all of us to go. When, therefore, I speak of the Church of Christ of tomorrow I am referring hopefully to a people, my own people, who are moving from the sect-type church to the denominational-type church. As a denomination that has moved into the mainstream of the church at large, we will have a great deal to offer in terms of our heritage, commitment, and plea. Until this happens we will have little impact upon the Christian world, and consequently upon the world generally, for we will be no more than an isolated sect that is content to play games with itself. As part of the Christian world,

however, we can bear witness to the apostolic proclamation and to the Biblical mandate for a united church and thus contribute to the victory over denominationalism that will eventually come to the Body of Christ upon earth.

If you are curious as to what I saw on our night out that caused me to speak to Ouida of the Church of Christ of tomorrow, I will be specific. The gathering was similar to those I have been a part of all over the country. In this case those gathered belonged to an influential congregation in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. The minister, who is a beautiful, open believer, and several of the elders were present, along with upwards of two dozen others, who were both young and old, intelligent, spiritual, affluent, and *growing.* I will list some of the ingredients of the Church of Christ of tomorrow.

1. Far and away the most important change is that they are sick and tired of being sectarians and refuse to be so any longer. This means that they now recognize that there are Christians beside themselves and that the Church of Christ folk are not the only ones that will be saved. This may sound like a negative trait, but it is really very positive, for it reflects an understanding of what the church really is: Christ's Body made up of all those everywhere who are in Jesus.

2. There is a new realization of the meaning of truth, a concept we have terribly abused. Truth is coming to be experienced in terms of a Person rather than as some system of doctrine drawn mainly from our own deductions. While there is no put-down of true doctrine, our people are growing more Christ-centered and are looking at things in terms of the one truth that really matters, which is Jesus Christ. Being right about Jesus is now far more relevant than being right about instrumental music or the millennium or speaking in tongues.

3. Disillusioned with our isolationism and exclusivism, they want to reach out and touch the larger Christian world. They have had enough of condemning others and are now ready to examine themselves. They are open to suggestions as to how they might work with other believers in serving and redeeming a lost world. This includes a desire to be more involved in helping suffering humanity, like Jesus did.

4. The Bible is becoming a different book. Now suspicious of proof-texting to support doctrines that may have been sectarian to start with, they have a hunger to know what the Scriptures are all about. Laying aside any party slant, the Bible is becoming an open book, full of beautiful, liberating truths. They want their preachers to open up the Scriptures, plainly but deeply.

5. Now more liberated, they are “as free and happy as calves let out of a stall,” to quote the TEV on Mal. 4:2. Consequently they are doing all sorts of weird things, such as reading “denominational books” and listening to the likes of James Dobson and going to hear the likes of Bill Gothard. They quote Francis Schaeffer, William Barclay, Elton Trueblood, Keith Miller, and John Stott as if they had heard them at the Fifth and Izzard Church of Christ in Little Rock!

6. They are growing increasingly wary with the law-gospel they. have been nurtured on all their lives in the Church of Christ and are discovering salvation by grace, which does not come easy, for it is very difficult for any people to give up a works salvation. But with our churches running over with broken homes and broken lives we are being beckoned by the Spirit to that righteousness imputed by Christ on the basis of faith rather than works. Our world aflame has shown us that we are not wise enough, good enough, rich enough, obedient enough, or right enough to do it on our own.

7. There is a real concern for the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer. Among our folk this rarely expresses itself in terms of tongue-speaking. It goes deeper than that, for the Spirit is being accepted as a comforter to the believer, enlightening her mind and bearing Christ’s likeness in her life.

8. A mutual ministry concept is emerging, expressing itself in house churches, various sharing structures, and a more open pulpit in the freer Churches of Christ. I know of several para-church groups within a Church of Christ that do some of these free things that they cannot do in the church. A group in Alabama has a tax-exempt corporation set up so they can do off-limit things like invite controversial speakers, but still they all hang in as members of the Church of Christ. There are hundreds, perhaps thousands, of house churches among us, of all types, usually *within* the church, sharing with each other in the Spirit.

These are some of the things I have in mind when I refer to the Church of Christ of tomorrow. I probably will not be around when it has *really* arrived, but the signs are so clear that I am confident that it will come. We can hasten the day by resolving here and now to *be* the Body of Christ instead of a sect.

In His own good time the Father will use the Church of Christ of tomorrow, along with many other renewal efforts, to answer the prayer of the Christ that all believers be one. We are all wonderfully blessed that we have an opportunity to be a part of the changing scene.

I am thankful for what I see already and I can hardly wait for the Church of Christ of tomorrow. I am resolved to be used, in my small corner, to help to make it so. You are coming along too, aren't you? *the Editor*

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Pilgrimage of Joy… No. 53

SPECTERS FROM THE PAST AT LEXINGTON

W. Carl Ketcherside

In my last installment I was in Friona, Texas. It is one of the great cattle feeding places in the United States. We visited one of the feeding pens. There were thousands of cattle. Everything was mechanized. The feed was mixed with supplements in a towering silo and fed by augers into the troughs. All the cattle did was to come and eat. It was almost like the church in a lot of places. The herd had nothing to do with selection. They had to take what was supplied. It was put into the feed trough and they could not question it. They must either eat it or sleep through it.

I went next to Portales, New Mexico, where I was a guest in the home of Frank Poynor, a brother with whom I had corresponded, and whom I had come to love. Our meeting was held in the Conference Room at the City Library. It was my privilege to have a number of young people from the New Mexico State College with us. A goodly number of them had recently left the large Church of Christ in the city and had started to meet to themselves. They had done so because they thought it was essential to protect their freedom from prejudice.

It all started over a Bible study held on campus. The young people were baptizing a number of other students. They obtained permission to use the baptistry at the church building. There was some objection to the dress of some of them. They wore jeans. They allowed their hair to grow a little longer than the people were accustomed to. They ignored the pews and sat down on the steps to the pulpit and on the floor surrounding the baptistry. They sang choruses. When one was baptized they lifted up their hands to God and praised Him. They hugged the person while he was still dripping wet. The deacon who was taking care of the building and unlocking the door became infuriated. He declared, "Not only did they not sit on the comfortable pews we had provided, but they sat there and sang songs that were not even in our books." So they left and began meeting where they were cemented together and not concretized.

At Lubbock our meeting was held in the Student Center at Texas Tech. It was preceded by a small gathering in the home of Dr. Thomas Langford, dean of the university, and a real man of God. A number of friends dropped in to talk about the progress of reformation. They were overjoyed with what was happening. The meeting at the center brought together a goodly number of readers of Mission Messenger in the area, some of them secretly "for fear of the Pharisees." There were also students present from Lubbock Christian College as well as from the local school of preaching. It was quite obvious I was saying some things they did not hear daily. I was "bringing certain strange things to their ears."

The question period was particularly penetrating. One young man asked if I were not afraid that I might be advocating heresy. I replied that I was even more afraid that he would confuse orthodoxy with heresy, and pointed out that it was Erasmus who said, "By identifying the new learning with heresy, you make orthodoxy synonymous with ignorance." I then mentioned that every reformer in history had been branded a heretic by the establishment. Luther, Huss, Calvin, Wesley and even Alexander Campbell. If I were a heretic I was in good company. All of these were hounded and harassed, driven out and persecuted during their lifetimes, and it was only after they had been dead a hundred years that they became heroes. Anyone who differs with us, who does not parrot the traditional ideas is regarded as a heretic. We mistake walking in the old paths with wallowing in the old ruts. It is not wrong to dissent. It may be wrong not to do so. The status quo is not sacred. We have to be willing to be reckoned as oddballs rather than to play ball sometimes.

It came to me that the reason these diverse people could come and hear me was because I represented no party or sect. I belonged solely to Jesus. I was continually astounded by the fact that people could grow up in the same community and know nothing about their "other brethren." There were six different groups present at Lubbock. Each of them knew only a certain group of preachers. They read only their own party papers. I introduced some who had met in business transactions but did not know each other as Christians. They could hear me with a clear conscience because I no longer represented any of them. I was simply a member of the fellowship of the unashamed. My only creed was Christ, my only law was love. I did not shrink from questions of anyone.

At Ruidoso, New Mexico, the following night, we met in the Luncheon Room at the Chaparral Motel. There were not many of us but it was a thrill to sit down and discuss "kingdom matters" with those who had vowed allegiance to the king. After it was allover we went to the lovely home of Brother Teague and continued talking until it was quite late. I have often wondered about those whom I met. I have heard of none of them during the years that have elapsed. Are they still faithful to the principles about which we talked, or has the lure of the world deflected them from their goal?

After a brief series at Ferry Road Church of Christ in Waynesville, Ohio, I went to the banquet held in the Student Center ballroom, at the University of Kentucky, in Lexington. I never visit the city without feeling a sense of something bordering upon awe. The cause was established there by Barton Warren Stone in 1816, with 24 members. It was here, just sixteen years later that the Disciples and Christians united in a meeting which began on New Year's Day and continued four days. On the following Lord's Day they communed together and pledged to each other their cooperation.

It was in Lexington that the debate between Alexander Campbell and N. L. Rice was held. It began at 10 o'clock, Wednesday, November 15, 1843. It lasted fifteen days. Each disputant made 64 speeches. The published account filled a book of 912 pages of small closely set type. Mr. Rice proved to be the most difficult opponent Mr. Campbell had met during his whole career. In 1847 the church in Lexington was the largest in the state. It contained 382 members. It had been beset by trouble over various things from the beginning. From 1864 to 1870 instrumental music became the most bitterly discussed issue in the Millennial Harbinger and in Lard's Quarterly. Some of its greatest antagonists were in Kentucky. Among these were J. W. McGarvey, Moses E. Lard, and I. B. Grubbs. Brother McGarvey withdrew his membership from the Broadway Church when the instrument was installed. But he never made it a test of fellowship. He still returned to Broadway to preach when invited to do so. He professed a sincere love for all of the brethren there. He was big enough to distinguish between fellowship of God's children and participation in a practice which he could not condone.

When I visit Lexington it seems that I am in a microcosm of the entire movement. Specters from the past appear to materialize out of the gloom. Heroes of yesterday who "waxed valiant in fight and turned to flight the armies of the aliens" seem to hover about. But gone is the deep seated spiritual dedication combined with intellectualism of the highest sort. What a privilege it would be to sit at the feet of Campbell, Stone and McGarvey. I spoke at the banquet on the topic "The Battle of the Pea Patch," drawn from 2 Samuel 23:11, 12.

I went next to Belmont Avenue congregation in Nashville. This was a unique and free congregation. Some had been excommunicated by Churches of Christ in the area because their opinions did not jibe with the establishment. Others had just grown tired and left of their own accord. They were searching for green pastures. They were tired of munching on dried hay. There were jeans-wearing, long-haired kids in the number, but there were also doctors, lawyers, professors and businessmen. All got along well. The only test of fellowship was your relation to Jesus. The service was alive unto and enlivened by the Spirit.

The congregation had a magnificent social consciousness. They supplied, food, clothing and furniture to the needy on a daily basis. They had chosen to remain in the old building and it was crowded for every service. There were two meetings held on Wednesday night while I was there. Both of them filled the place to capacity. A lot of students from David Lipscomb College came to hear me. They sat on the floor, on the steps of the pulpit and in the baptistery. Some of them stood patiently in the rear.

People drove long distances to be present. I met young people who were in Nashville, hoping to make good in country or bluegrass music. The service was so unstructured that anyone could come up on the platform, or stand where he was, and tell what Jesus meant to him. Don Finto was generally responsible for the meetings. He had been a teacher at David Lipscomb College but was let out in one of their purges. He was joined by several other professors who were guillotined and who helped to start Belmont. It was a church whose time had come.

Actually the church had been there for many years. The father of Norvel Young was one of the elders. But the church was fading into the background as the community changed. It was dying rapidly. Only a handful of people were attending. Most of them were afraid to return at night. Drugs and prostitution were all around them in the streets. Stealing and vandalism took their toll. And then renewal set in. Drug users came back from a living death through Jesus. Young prostitutes found a haven of rest in Jesus. In an amazing fellowship which knew no second-class citizens of the kingdom people were baptized unto a living hope. Obviously there were risks. There are always risks where freedom is found and everything is not cut, dried and stacked beforehand. But it was a great thing to be a part of a congregation which had been resurrected from the dead. It was while I was there that I met the father and mother of Pat Boone. They were gracious, kind and unassuming. We went out to eat together one night so they could tell me their story. They were greatly disturbed when they heard that Pat and Shirley had become wrapped up in the Holy Spirit. They prayed for them every night, asking God to bring them back. They had all been members of the Churches of Christ for years. One night the elder Brother Boone could not sleep, so in the middle of the night he slipped out to read his Bible and pray. While he was praying he became convinced of the presence of the Holy Spirit. He awakened his wife and told her that Pat was right. She arose and prayed and said she experienced the nearness of the Spirit. They were so overjoyed at the discovery that they made the mistake of telling about it next Sunday. Sister Boone was divested of her class which she taught and they were both excommunicated. They were still attending there, however, as they loved those who had treated them so unfairly.

Right after I left Nashville I went for a Talkathon to Missouri University. It lasted about nine hours in all. I began at 1 :30 p.m. and closed at 10:30 p.m. Students could come and go as classes or work demanded. The room was always full and some were standing in the hall ready to take the place of those who had to vacate. There was a fifteen minute rest period every two hours. In each segment I spoke for 30 minutes and then answered questions for the remainder of the time. Some of the questions were very interesting. They were the kind you would expect from students who were part of a great university under the domination of humanistic thinking.

We discussed the relativity of truth and I suggested that in its final analysis truth was a person and not a proposition. Jesus declared that he was the way, the truth and the life. Before a proposition can be stated it has to exist first as a concept in a logical mind. I postulated that all truth had to exist in a divine mind. It was a great session.

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ON PLAYING IT SAFE

Two boys were riding up a hill on a bicycle built for two. The hill was very steep and it was only after great effort that they got to the top. When they did, the boy on the front seat turned to his pal and said, “I thought for a minute there we weren’t going to make it.”

“So did I!” replied the other. “In fact, if I hadn’t kept my foot on the brake all the way up we would have rolled back down.”

The story is a parable of the life of the church. Some are like the boy at the front of the bike, they “pedal” for all they are worth to move the church ahead. They are seekers after truth who want to know more of God’s will for their lives. When they discover some new truth they want to apply it and share it with others. But there are others like the boy in back. Equally sincere and devoted, these have a negative approach. They are forever occupied with the fear of slipping backwards, always riding with the brakes on. To them, every new idea, whether it be an insight into Scripture or a plan for more effective action, is treated as a threat to their current position rather than as a boost to forward progress. New ideas cannot be evaluated objectively because the negative mind can think only of what may be lost if something new is accepted. So the brakes are applied *just to be safe!* -- *Robert Meyers*

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OUR CHANGING WORLD

The First Christian Church (Disciples) in Colusa, Ca. is presently having a weekly class in Disciple history. Their bulletin asks: "Have you ever wondered why there is a Church of Christ, Christian Church (Church of Christ) and Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and where they all had their origin? Do you know why some of our heritage prefer not to use musical instruments? What do you know?" The minister of this church, Kenneth Pries, is also trying to work up a unity seminar that will bring all our people together to consider their common roots. He is a gracious Christian to refer to some of us as those who "prefer not to use instrumental music." I would that it was as simple as that. His address is 725 Jay St., Colusa, Ca. 95932, if you would like to encourage him in his concerns.

Jim Smith of Bedford, Texas sent an ad clipped from the Fort Worth *Star-Telegram,* advertising for a preacher for a Spanish-speaking church. "Applicant must be a member of Church of Christ," is so unambiguous that there are likely to be no applicants from the Church of God, Christian Church, or even Christ's Church. In these parts at least everyone knows what "Church of Christ" means. Still we insist that we are not a denomination, which must sound odd to rational ears. The salary is $300.00 a week, which isn't bad for "a high school graduate with at least two years of experience." I wonder what our System is doing to young men presumably committed to Him who had no place to lay his head. In these days of gross professionalism it is rare for a young man to "Suffer hardship as a good soldier of Christ Jesus," which happens to be a dictum of Holy Scripture. When the Texas Employment Commission starts handling our openings, isn't it time to take a hard look?

Dave Langford, a remarkable young man who is a friend of ours, writes from the Houston Bible Training Work, where he is on the staff, that encouraging things are happening among the "non-class" Churches of Christ, to use the term they use. He is traveling among these churches in behalf of the school and state, that he is finding more and more of the Spirit of Christ. I have long said that these people are doing more for the unity of the Spirit among us than any of our segments or sects (take your choice!). As for Dave, he recently had the privilege of being in a seminar with the renowned Martin Marty, theologian of University of Chicago, while at Oklahoma U., which broadened his perspective. He says Prof. Marty hailed Alexander Campbell as one of America's foremost religious leaders.

The Gallatin Church of Christ (Tennessee), where I am to minister April 12-15 by the way, has on its letterhead: *Our Goal: A New Testament Church in Teaching, Ordinances and Life.* That is super! Every word is in keeping with our glorious heritage. Campbell would rejoice in the emphasis given to *ordinances.* The line might even read New *Coven-*

ant Church, and even better. New Covenant Community, but we can't move too fast. We are getting with it and that's what counts. Hans Kung, Roman Catholic theologian at Tubingen University in Germany was recently removed from his position as "Catholic theologian," though he continues to teach at the university. The German hierarchy did this because of his teaching on the nature of the church, papal infallibility and Jesus. In a visit to Harvard in November Prof. Kung told the press that he was eager to talk to the pope about all this, who refuses to see him. While he still believes in the papacy as such, he pleads for an "ecumenical pope" who can speak for all Christianity, something like Pope John XXIII was. He hopes that the pope will recognize the validity of Protestant ministries and eucharist, but fears this will not come soon. He sees the present pope as too narrow, despite his many' gifts, and therefore a detriment to ecumenical interests. Kung's besetting sin seems to be his challenge of papal infallibility. But he will remain a Roman Catholic, he says, and will not join the Protestant faculty at Tubingen even if offered

A new assembly has begun in the St Louis area under the leadership of Michael Hall, formerly of the Central Church of Christ in St. Louis. It calls itself Good News Christian Fellowship, and it professes to be "Non-denominational Biblical Evangelical Proclaiming 'the good news of great joy,' A restoration Movement church implementing the idea of the 'priesthood of all believers,'" Michael is an "equipper" rather than the minister. For further information: Box 3536, St. Louis 63143.

In a recent editorial in *Firm Foundation* Reuel Lemmons called upon Churches of Christ to a "world vision," charging that "we are in serious trouble and don't know it." He says the Churches of Christ are shrinking in membership for the first time in their history, referring, we presume, to a 1906 beginning date rather than 33 A.D. The cause of this, he concludes, is that we are becoming less evangelistic, with our preachers serving as counselors and church managers instead of ministers of the word. He thinks we might even become extinct soon after the turn of the century! I like Barton W. Stone's prognosis better, which was to the effect that the sect he had created would "die and sink into the Body of Christ at large."

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READERS' EXCHANGE

May God bless your efforts and may we all come to understand the peace, wisdom, and love that lies within a Spirit-filled life of service. -- *Phyllis Stanley, Campden, Ontario*

Until I came across your journal in the (Christian college) library, I was discouraged over attitudes common in '"our brotherhood" against open-mindedness, Christian love, and scholarship. I admit that it was prideful of me to suppose that only I, with a few others, were able to see what Christianity is all about. I am happy to find that I was wrong. My wife and I want to subscribe to Restoration Review, and we wish you luck for the future. -- *Name Withheld.*

I am pleased to read about the Wycliffe translators and their stand on faith vs. baptism, as to which leads to salvation. I have long objected to programs which spend as much for lessons as they do for Bibles to send overseas. If, as they claim, we can all understand the Bible alike, there is no need for the lessons. If they believed what they say, they could spend every cent on Bibles and know that the harvest would be nothing but pure Church of Christ. They know better, hence the lessons. -- *Adele Bowen, Farmington, N.M.*

I have been reading you so long you feel like my father. You challenge my thinking. Living in Mormon country I really see the need for us to know what we believe and to live it out in our lives and to live in peace with one another. Even if we disagree, we are still to live in peace and unity. --*John A. Robinson, Cedar City, Utah*

Thank you for your recent message regarding tax reductions, deficit spending, and unnecessary government involvement in our lives. I promise to do my part at the state level. -- *Bill Clements, Governor of Texas*

I find your irenic spirit refreshing and your insight into the nature of the body of Christ to be Biblical. Keep up the good work! -- *Dave Beard, Parkcrest Church of Christ, Long Beach, Ca.*

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BOOK NOTES

Dayspring by Anne S. White provides a select Scripture and meditation for each day of the year, the kind of stuff that can be read again and again. It is ideal at the bedside or for mealtime meditation. Short and pithy, it provides meat to chew on as well as milk to drink. If you do not have such a habit as this in your home, we urge it upon you, and this is a good place to start. 5.50 pp.

If you want to understand the Old Testament better, we suggest Francis Schaeffer's *Joshua and the Flow of Biblical History*, which is a good example of what a believer can get from a study of those old Scriptures. What he says about Rahab the harlot alone is

worth the moderate price of only 4.50 pp. Along with this you might want *More Psalms for All Seasons*, by David Hubbard, president of Fuller Seminary. He shows that the psalms are not poetry for escapists, but our kindred spirits learning to live by faith in a world of suffering like ours. Only 2.25 pp.

Risky Christianity by Bruce Larson is what the title indicates, that goodness is not a matter of playing it safe but of taking chances. If we grow in our closeness to God, we must take chances. It urges upon us the risk-fraught life of the early church. It makes the Christian faith plain, perhaps too plain for some of us. 5.50 pp.

Both of K. C. Moser's old titles are back in print, so we can send you *The Way of Salvation* and *The Gist of Romans* at 5.50 each or both for 9.00. If you are among our people who are getting turned on to the grace of God, these books are for you.

If you want to read Biblical theology in terms you can handle and really profit from, we recommend a new title by Dale Moody, a professor at Southern Baptist Seminary who took his Ph.D, at Oxford, *The Word of Truth.* It is a summary of Christian doctrine based on Biblical revelation, including such areas as revelation, God, creation, man, sin, and salvation, Christ and the church, the consummation. I found his treatment of the millennium resourceful, fair, enlightening. And I like the way he says, "I think" or "I believe," avoiding the usual editorial "We." If you are serious about the Bible, this is for you. At 24.95 it seems terribly high, but being over 600 pages it is several books in one.

In our fast world conciseness is the name of the game, and two new volumes are really on target: *Concise Bible Handbook* at 8.95 and *Concise Bible Encyclopedia* at 9.95. The first covers all the books of the Bible, with drawings and pictures, even occasional essays such as "The Virgin Birth," while the second provides vital information on Biblical subjects from A to Z, concisely drawing upon the latest findings. We will send you *both* for 17.00 postpaid, upwards of 650 pages.

Especially for newer readers! We will send you 18 back issues of this journal, selected at random, for only 3.00.

During April the editor will be engaged in some interesting appointments and invites you to be present when possible. On Saturday a.m., April 11, he joins Ervin Waters in a discussion of preaching and teaching at the Quaker Ave. Church of Christ in Lubbock. April 12-15 he will be with the Gallatin Church of Christ in Gallatin, Tenn. April 17-19 he will be with the First Christian, Henderson, Tenn., where on Sat., April 18, the Dixie Fellowship Rally will have its 19th annual meeting. The theme in Henderson will be *Rethinking Restoration Principles*, the first meeting being at 7:30 p.m., Friday, April 17.

We appreciate your response to our effort to increase our circulation by sending us clubs of subscribers, which are only 2.00 per name in clubs of 5 or more. Many of our readers can easily come up with five names (or 4 others if you are renewing), and this is one thing you can do for the cause of renewal among our people.

We now have only three bound volumes of this journal in print: *The Word Abused* (1975-76) at 5.95; *Principles of Unity and Fellowship* (1977) at 5.50; *The Ancient Order* (1978) at 5.50. Since our bookbinder is well again and back at work, we should have the bound volume for 1979-80 sometime this spring. If you have ordered, it will be sent to you with invoice enclosed.

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